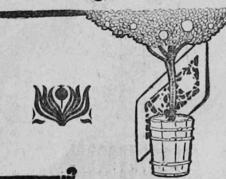
WOMAN'S HOME PAGE

CHARLES DWYER. .. Editor.



A FORBIDDEN CHRISTMAS

By MARY HASTINGS



her spinning wheel. "If I am too far from the fire I freeze, and if I am too near the fire I cook," she laughingly complained, setting her wheel awhirl again. "It is a bitter night," her old uncle agreed from his corner of the settle on the other side of the cobbled chimney-place of rough stones and mortar, where the great logs were biazing merrily.

Young Westcott, on the settle beside him, said nothing at all, but his eyes followed her every movement with a

nim, said nothing at all, but his eyes followed her every movement with a sort of reluctant fascination. They had been following her ever since her arrival in the Massachusetts colony, six months before. He had never seen such a girl nor dreamed of such bright bewilderment of beauty.

Something in the silence, perhaps something in Westcott's eyes, which rested on her, seemed to disconcert the girl, for she cast about for a subject of remark.

Dropping her distaff, she bent to rouse the children. "Wake up, little folk! I must take you up to bed, Miles, dear; wake up! The apples you set to roast are all cinders. Elizabeth, wake up!"

The little girl sat up with a start, her

The little girl sat up with a start, her round, sleepy eyes opening in bewilderment.

"Is it Christmas yet?" she demanded. The old man roused as at a shot and his deep eyes under their shaggy prows bent peeringly upon them.

"Christmas!" he repeated, with angry smphasis. "Where have you heard of Christmas?"

"Zellah spid." stammarad the ""."

Christmas?"

"Zellah said," stammered the little girl, "that in merry England—"

"Merry England!" came grimly from the old man's throat.

"She said they did no work that say, but had a great dinner, and some set up a tree from the forest with candles on it—"

"Yea," said the old man, "there were not enough abominations in England with their masking and mumming, but they must needs bring in this German summery. And what did she tell you was the meaning of it?"

The small brother rescued her with a

The small brother rescued her with a remembered phrase.
"They are so glad that the Lord is born," he repeated in his grave little

sing-song.

"And that is the way for a righteous people to show a holy thanksgiving? By sticking up a tree like a popish idol in the house and rigging it with theathen candles? We keep no Christmas here. The laws provide punishment for anyone who keeps that day with a feast or even ceases from his usual labor. Put this folly from your minds—let me hear no more of it, and do you," turning to his niece, "keep your tongue from running on such natters, I charge you, for your soul's lake."

"Nay, Mr. Colton," young Westcott remonstrated, touched by her flushed face, "she did but tell them of the She uid but tell them of the custom, not commend it to them."
She took the little ones up to bed and when the girl presently returned she ound her uncle asleep.
Rejuctantly Westcott rose to go.
"It is late," he murmured.
She nodded, with unconscious ruefuless.

Westcott took a quick step nearer her, his fur cap gripped tensely in both hands. There was something that he had come over half-minded to say that evening, something the sight of this girl always tempted him to say.

He distrusted her beauty and his desire for it.

He distrusted her beauty and his de-bire for it.

Undeniably there had been tender an-ticipation in the girl's face. It went out now before a flush of hot shame, and her eyes were twin fires of pride.

"You are so thoughtful," she said, with a scornful little smile, whose mockery he felt, but scarcely under-

I. will come to-morrow," he prom-

Thus driven, "I do, indeed," he averred. "I see great harm in outrag-"Oh, the wise opinion." came her mocking echo. "You see, it is the opinion of others that matters to you, Mr. Westcott, and not your own."

Westcott, and not your own."

"It is not, of course, my affair—"

"It is not," she promptly agreed.

"I shall trust," said Westcott stiffly,
"not only to your better judgment, but
to—to—" plainly he did not know
to what to true—"to your valuation of
my good opinion," he concluded impressively.

"Perhaps that is not so great as you
flatter yourself." she flashed back, de-

flatter yourself," she flashed back, de-flantly. "A good-night to you, Mr. Westcott."

flantly. "A good-night to you, Mr. Westcott."

"And you must never, never tell!"

"Never!" echoed the small Elizabeth, solemnly.

"Never!" echoed the smaller Miles.

"Because," went on Zellah, as she bent over them in the chill dark of the Christmas morning, "because if you ever tell one word about it there will—never—be—another—tree."

A long-drawn "Oh-h-h!" came from them. The tree was a very small one, and the candles were the green bayberry wax of their daily use, and the scarlet garlands were only the red forest berries, but to their round eyes it was a blazing spectacle of delight.

"A Christmas tree!" whispered Elizabeth in awe-struck tones. Miles could only stare.

"Yes, a Christmas tree," repeated Zellah gayly. A joyous sense of adventure and of daring, mingled with a subtle, feminine satisfaction at this defiance of cautious Westcott, filled her with merry excitement. She whisked across the room, and, bundling the children up in comforters, sat hugging them to her while they watched the candles burn.

So wrapt was she that she did not hear the step on the stairs. Without

candles burn.

So wrapt was she that she did not hear the step on the stairs. Without warning the door was flung open and Uncle stood staring in on them as on a scene accursed.

Her offense seemed such a trivial thing to the girl, so harmless and childish a disobedience, that she was total-

ish a disobedience, that she was total-ly unprepared for the catastrophe it brought upon her.

brought upon her.

She, Zellah Coiton, to be brought into court like a common ill doer, denounced by her own uncle, stared at by a dreadful ring of neighbors!

Over her head had rattled the hail of the magistrate's rebuke; she had heard, too, as in a dream, her uncle's voice, lamenting this disgrace to his house, but accepting the Lord's will in tones of fervor, and then, cutting into her consciousness like a knife, the sentence of punishment. She was to stand two hours in the public square beside the pillory, bearing about her neck the placard, "A wayward and contumacious person." person.

person."

Beside the house of correction they haited and Zellah mounted the small platform beside the stocks. Justice Bilss pinned on the paper with its condemning description and shook his grizzled head in stern sadness over it.

Without turning her rigid head she was aware of the faces increasing about her. Frankly curious, in the foreground trooped the children—lured by this new spectacle from their mockery of fat old Goody May chained to a post at the corner of Prison Lane for having slapped her husband's cheek—neighbors' children, some of them, whom she knew and played with, staring at her with awed horror; others, the children of servants and slaves and freedmen, sniggering and laughing in the ignorant cruelty of their young years.

Behind them sauntered the sailors Behind them sauntered the sailors from the Conrad, gaping and jesting at her beauty, and all around, crossing the square in twos and threes, came the townspeople in the release from work that lecture day brought them.

She drew her hood further over her head, and as she did so she lowered her awas and says these forces are reased to the season. "It will come to-morrow," he promised, lingering.
"To wish me Merry Christmas or see if I am wickedly abstaining from work?" she impishly persisted.
"I could not think any such ill doing fry by ou," he answered gravely.
"Ill doing?" she hotly flared back.
"Do you, in truth, see any ill doing in observing the day?"

She drew liter and a she did so she lowered her eyes and saw three figures crossing the square—Betty Morrison, gay in her new London cloak, and her mother, and William Westcott. In that moment it shame that life can hold.

A laugh rose from the children, ever pressing closer to the platform foot, if the west and a snowball struck her chin. Involuntarily her hand went to the bruise. In the laughter gained and another ball in the pressing closer to the platform foot, if the west and the property of the propert



A sick terror shook her then, for she knew well to what rude lengths the trougher classes went in their treatnest of pilloried offenders. True, she ment.

Another ball and another reached her, and then her heart gave a great leap, for across the square came William Westcott, sending her tormentors to right and left. Then he stepped up on the platform by her side, looking down at the crowd in grim alertness. She did not look at him. After that first throb of relief came again the terrible inrush of shame, with added polgnancy.

Certain of his identity in the winter twilight.

"Merry Christmas!" she gave back with a quick uplift of spirits. It was to be a Merry Christmas after all, her pride declared defiantly. She was turn ing the tables on them all.

"Give us your bundle," the captain told her, swinging it under his left arm while his right went skillfully out to encircle her cloak-shrouded figure.

olgnancy. away!" she said suddenly in a choked little voice that she hated for its He did not stir.

"Go away" she relterated once nore, and after that she neither spoke

Westcott scarcely understood himself the force that had brought him there or the strange new emotions surging through him. He had held back from the girl, distrusting her latent possibilities while she was yet innocent of offense, but now that her humiliation was offered to every eye he had sprung to share it, his reproach lost in the thrill of an unknown feeling more poignant than pity or shame.

When the interminable time was at last over and Zellah, stiff and chilled, stepped down from the little platform, he put himself at her side.

"Go away from me—I want to see no one," she flung out.

"Go away from me—I want to see no one," she flung out at him, and with bent head darted down a side street.

Her route led her to the shore, which she skirted for a time, floundering through the damp snowdrifts in the routh warm rough warm rough.

rough wagon road.

Zellah eyed the water with gloomy fascination. She wished miscrably that she possessed the courage to fling herself into it and so end at once the menace of the to-morrows.

"Ship ahoy, there!" rang out a jovial voice, and, lifting her bent head, the girl saw a young man almost in front of her.

"God knows!" she answered wildly, her voice breaking.
"Nay," he returned, coming nearer, his eyes shining more and more, "Bob Breresford knows. Come with me out of this place where they made a mock of you. Come back to England, lass."
"To England?" she faltered, held by the bluff decision of his manner.
"Aye, to England, on the Conrad. She weigs anchor at 5, when the tide turns."

Again Zellah looked at the ship. On the Conrad to England! England seemed heaven realized. It did not matter where she went after she got there; anything was better than taking up her life again here. The captain saw her eyes flash, her lips take on resolution.

money enough for my passage. I have but a few pieces. Is it much?" "Tut, a trifie! All will be made right with a kiss now for earnest money, my prettiness," he laughed, bending toward her.

She sprang away; but before she could speak the hot indignation he saw dame into her face he dashed into

name into her face he dashed into apology.

"A dozen pardons, mistress. There, do not run; I meant no harm. "Twas but a poor joke—a sallor's joke."

She came slowly toward him again, searching his face, and he had wisdom enough to keep it serious and at a proper distance. And so, after more talk, she promised to meet him there at that place at half after four with such belongings as she could get together.

gether.

When her father's huge timeplece, sagging down her pocket, warned her of the approaching time, she lifted her bundle from its hiding place and start-

"Merry Christmas!" she gave back with a quick uplift of spirits. It was to be a Merry Christmas after all, her pride declared defiantly. She was turn, ing the tables on them all.

"Give us your bundle," the captain told her, swinging it under his left arm while his right went skillfully out to encircle her cloak-shrouded figure. "And now, lass, for the earnest moncy," he whispered, dragging her toward him.

Furiously she tried to wrench herself away, but dropping the bundle the cap-tain held her fast and pressed one hand over her mouth.

kiss I mean to have! Come; stop this—"

A sudden hand at the captain's collar jerked him a good four feet away, and a blow under his chin added another foot to that distance. Surprised, but sobered, by the attack, Breresford stood a moment blinking at his antagonist, then with a rush he made fiercely at him. The captain was the heavier man and inflamed with rage and rum, but the other had the longer reach and the quicker sight.

Suddenly there was a rush, a thud of blows and a gasp of laboring breath. For a second both figures were indistinguishable in a lightning give and take; then, one on top the other, they went down.

It was Westcott who first arose, and he assisted the captain up by his collar.

"Take yourself off unless you want

lar.
"Take yourself off unless you want more," he commanded, breathing

"Take yourself off unless you want more." he commanded, breathing heavily.

"Presently, presently. I mean no harm. I am Bob Breresford, captain of the Conrad yonder, and very much at your service." "By St. George and the Dragon, but this is no place for a maid like you! Where are you going?" "God knows!" she answered wildly, her voice breaking.

"Nay," he returned, coming nearer, his eyes shining more and more, "Bob Breresford knows. Come with me out of this place where they made a mock other.

"Cond knows!" she answered wildly, her voice breaking.

"Nay," he returned, coming nearer, his eyes shining more and more, "Bob Breresford knows. Come with me out of this place where they made a mock other.

"You agreed to go?" he said. "With

"You agreed to go?" he said. "With him?"

"To England," the girl answered. "I wanted to go back to England."

"And I'll take her back now, and she still wants to go," the captain thrust in, "with no more talk of kissing either. She's a good little lass, and your folk made a vile show of her."

"Aye," said Westcott, "but never again. Zellah, do you want to gonow?" he cried out passionately, his face deathly pale in the dim light but for the livid bruise on one cheek. "Do you want to gonow?"

saw her eyes flash, her hips take on resolution.

"But—but I would have to go in secret," she put before him.

"Aye," he laughed, "we'll stow you safely away till out of harbor. Never fear for that, my lass. You are of the right stuff, you are,"

"And then—I know not if I can get whistle sounded from the shore; he removes enough for my neasons. I have blied with another and held out his plied with another and held out his

plied with another and held out his hand to Westcott.

"No offense, sir," he said. "I know when a game's done," and he melted away in the darkness.

Westcott took one quick step to the girl and drew her close. There were no questions, no replies. All had been asked and answered between them in that breathless moment. She lay still in his clasp like an exhausted bird, and under the weight of her light form his heart throbbed with an almost terrifying joy.

"Zellah," he whispered brokenly,

"Zellah, I love you. Oh, how I love you! "You will live on, here, with me?"

with me?"
Tenderly he pressed the little hooded head back against his arm to read her face. His first kiss was salt with the tears she shed. She did not know why, but in her eyes, when she shyly raised sagging down her pocket, warned her of the approaching time, she lifted her bundle from its hiding place and started down the shore.

"Merry Christmas, lass!" softly called the walting figure, as she hesitated, un-

DINNER **FAVORS**

May Be Made Both Artistic and Humorous With a Little Ingeninty

By Linda Hull Larned.

THOSE who entertain, even though it be most informally, are looking for something unique in place cards and favors for dinners, funcheons or suppers. Those who are gifted with artistic ability, especially if combined with a sense of humor, may make these little accessories out of home material, and these are always appreciated by the guest. But there are to be found in a few shops some really unique arrangements for designating the guests' places at the table.

the guest. But there are to be found in the guest. The top of which is a versuit of responsible to the control of a state of the stable to the control of the state of the stable to the control of the state of the stable to the control of the state of the stable to the control of the state of the stable to the control of the state of the stable to the state of the state of the stable to the state of the state

are all round, but there are also oblong baskets with round ends containing white daisies or yellow flowers. For a bride's table there are oblong baskets with square ends, in imitation silver, with tall handles tied with white robbon. These are, of course, filled with orange blossoms. I must not forget the tiny fern baskets filled with moss. The advantage of using these pretty German novelties—for they are all made in clever Germany—is that of their lasting quality, as guests are not supposed to take them away unless told to do so by the hostess. A set of these, in any one color, to match the table decorations, is indeed a very pretty table equipment.

If holly be selected there are small are all round, but there are also oblong

If holly be selected there are small If holly be selected there are small glass bonbon dishes with a bronze holly branch and berries, enameled in natural colors, laid across the edge. These could be given to the women guests as souvenirs, while horseshoe paperweights, trimmed with a similar branch of holly, are intended for the men. Among the new dinner cards one finds quaint figures of men and women which stand by the help of a pasteboard back. They are eighteenth centered. nnds quaint figures of men and women which stand by the help of a pasteboard back. They are eighteenth century ladies and gentlemen, and are made in France. Each one carries a distaff, on the top of which is a wreath of flowers, in which the narrow card bearing the name of the guest may be slipped.

How to Make Glace Walnuts-Seasonable Sweetmeats for Parties

B OIL one pound of sugar with a cup of water until it "hairs" of water until it "hairs," then put to it half a teacup of vinegar, boil it rapidly until on try-ing it in ice water it cracks between the teeth. From this point watch it chan closely until you see it begin to turn color, then remove it quickly and set it on a hot brick, or in boiling water

then go over them all a second time; | soft; now take off the woolly inner handsomer.

after that.

Almonds must be blanched and thor-oughly dried before they are dropped into the candy, and for those who like carefully mounted on a toothpick, into the flavor of scorched almonds they may be put into a sharp oven till they begin to change color; watch them very closely or they will get brown and lose flavor. If more convenient they may be scorched in a frying pan, shaking them about to prevent burning. When cool they should be dropped into the candy in the same way as the walnuts.

Carefully mounted on a toothpick, into very hot candy, giving as thin a coat as possible.

The candy for this purpose is to be made in the following way: Boil a pound of sugar to what is called the feather (232 degrees F.). This you can tell in this way: When the candy begins to "hair," dip a silver fork into it, let the syrup run off the end, then blow against the tines sharply: if only they may be scorched in a frying pan, shaking them about to prevent burning. When cool they should be dropped into the candy in the same way as the walnuts.

Caramels.

Caramel is really sugar boiled till it changes color, but the candy under-stood as "caramels" is something dif-

his second coat makes them much andsomer.

As soon as the candy begins to get sugar and half a pint of water boiled stiff but the belt of the sugar and half a pint of water boiled stiff put it back on the fire, watch it one minute; put the nuts into this till it is liquid again, remembering that it will burn very easily indeed; are clear. Take them out, put them on it will only bear making hot once a sieve in a warm place (over the register, or in a plate warmer, or on a

blow against the tines sharply; if only a few beads blow out let it boil a minute longer, then blow again. If balls like soap bubbles float from your fork, wait only a second or so and blow again; the balls instead of floating will perhaps break as they leave the Two pounds of sugar, one cup of thick cream, two ounces of fresh butter (salt washed out), extract from two ounces of coffee. Melt the sugar with as little water as possible in a saucepan that will allow for all the juice of a small lemon, and with large dient it is convenient to work from, or close to the stove, as the candy while the nut is being taken out.

Have some split walnute of the first convenient of the candy while the nut is being taken out.

Coffee Cream Caramels.

Two pounds of sugar, one cup of thick cream, two ounces of fresh butter (salt washed out), extract from two ounces of coffee. Melt the sugar with as little water as possible in a saucepan over the first (take care to use a saucepan that will allow for all the ingredients and give room for th bubling up), when the sugar bubbles pour in the cream very slowly, stirring also very slowly, then add the butter will go back to solid sugar. This is called opalized or half-grained sugar and is used for candying marrons or dried fruit.

AMUSING **GUESTS**

Entertaining Suggestions From Various People in Different Parts of the Country

continues until a signal is given, at which each keeps whatever article he has at that time. Mrs. R. E. C.

STUNT which never falls to amuse a party, and which is particularly popular among men, is trying to brush a coin out of the palm of the hand. Provide a quarter and a whisk broom and let each one try it in turn. The coin must be placed in the little depression in the middle of the palm, and the motion of the broom must be purely a brushing one; it is not fair to dig out the quarter with the end of the broom. It sounds very easy, but I have seen dozens of people try to dislodge the quarter and not one of them succeeded. L. W.

HE following diversion will be found a laughter producer for any company of wideawake, intelligent people. Let each guest draw a picture at the head of a sheet of paper, and at the bottom of the page give the TITLE of the subject. Then, turning the paper up, over this title, so that no one can see what the artist has written, pass the paper to the left-hand neighbor, who scans the sketch and writes above the artist's turned over strip what he or she thinks the picture represents. To a clever or witty person it usually represents something very different from the original title, but that will be all the more funny. When all have written a title one person may read the papers, letting the audience see the sketch before the titles are read. The real titles should be read before the others.

WHITE ELEPHANT PARTY is great fun for either young or elderly people. Each one is sent an invitation bidding him to take advantage of the occasion to get rid of some white elephant. Any article which is undesirable to the owner, or, as is more often the case, a ridiculous article purchased for the occasion. Is brought, nearly wrapped up and made as deceptive as possible in outward appearances. At a given signal each one